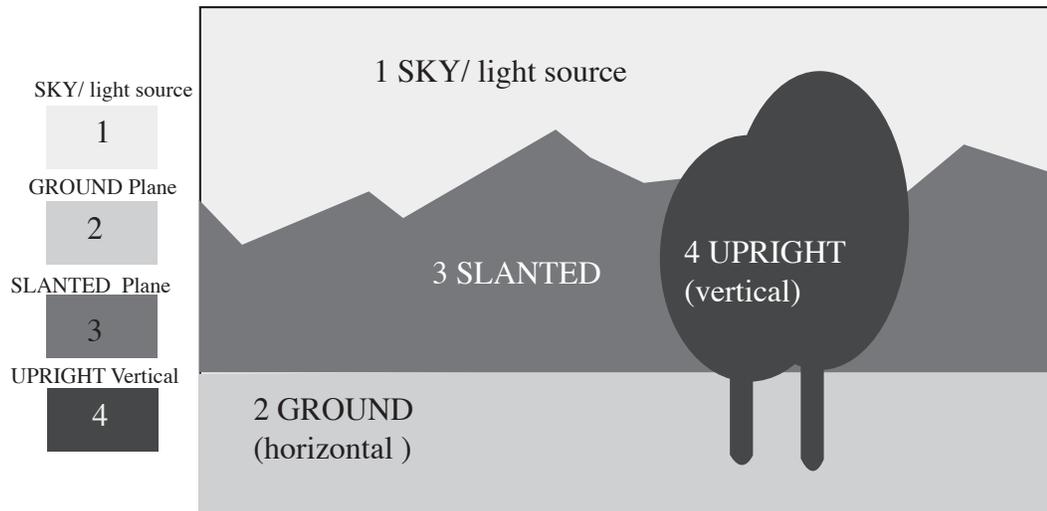


# 4 Value Planes of a landscape

Landscape values are much easier to understand if they are viewed as falling into four major divisions or “value zones.”



Landscape values fall into four broad value divisions — sky, ground, slanted and upright. The angle of the plane in relation to the sun determines how much light it receives, which in turn determines its value. Although not absolute, these divisions are consistent enough to serve as a reliable to assign value at the beginning of a painting. There is also some overlap between the divisions, but the overall value of the sky remains lighter than the overall value of the land.

1 – SKY – The sky is almost always the lightest value zone in the landscape and accounts for what is usually the largest value contrast in the painting — between the sky and the land. This holds true even on cloudy or overcast days.

2 – GROUND - (horizontal planes) – The ground is a horizontal plane. Being directly under the sky, it receives more light than upright elements like trees and hills, but is still darker than the sky in the vast majority of circumstances. The exception might be snow or sandy beaches on a sunny day.

3 – SLANTED (slanting/sloping planes) – The next darkest zone is slanting planes, like hills. They receive less light than the ground, and are therefore darker than the ground, but lighter than more vertical elements.

4 – UPRIGHT (vertical planes) – Vertical elements, such as trees and architecture receive the least amount of light and so are usually the darkest values in the painting. Upright elements, of course, can be made up of two or more values, a light side and a shadow side. Depending on the color of an element, its light side may be close in value to the slanting planes or the ground plane.

# 4 Value Planes of a landscape

Landscape values are much easier to understand if they are viewed as falling into four major divisions or “value zones.”



This photo demonstrates value planes in a scene.



SKY PLANE



UPRIGHT PLANE  
Vertical plains in shadow



SLANTED PLANE  
In this case the rounding shape of the tree foliage. Others could be the side of a mountain or roof top.



GROUND PLANE  
(Horizontal planes)